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# **Employment Support as Knowledge Creation**

**John O'Brien**

**Lithonia, Georgia**

**Michael Callahan**

**Ocean Springs, Mississippi**

**Marc Gold & Associates**

## Employment Support as Knowledge Creation

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the US labor force includes 70% of working aged people with no disability and 22% of working aged people with disabilities (BLS, December 2009). To reduce this gap, employment services must produce adequate flows of knowledge to move people with disabilities from labor force exclusion to inclusion.

Unfortunately, there are signs that the effort to support integrated employment on behalf of the people with developmental disabilities is stalling (Butterworth, et. al., 2010; Rusch & Braddock, 2004). As part of a strategy to restore a positive momentum, we focus on the subgroup of people with developmental disabilities who require individually negotiated employment conditions, identify some practices for creating practical knowledge, and illustrate their application in one element of assisting people into customized employment, the *Discovery* process (Callahan, Shumpert & Condon, 2009).

From the perspective of knowledge creation regarding the job seeker's conditions for success, interests toward certain aspects of the job market and, most importantly, their potential contributions for which they will be paid, every person who succeeds at a job does so by participating in relationships that produce sufficient practical knowledge to adequately answer four critical questions:

- “Do I want to work?”
- “What is my focus?” (What kind of work interests me, what are my conditions for success and my unique contributions?)
- “How can I get the job?” and

- “How can I maintain employment over time?” (i.e., “Can I continue to make a contribution worth my pay?”)

These are not trivial questions for anyone. Success depends on the level of pertinent intelligence generated in the process of answering these questions, and most Americans will face them repeatedly in an economic environment that shifts continually and fundamentally as the return on assets steadily decreases for US businesses, competitive intensity outstrips US labor productivity, the rate at which US businesses topple from global leadership increases, and a rapidly developing digital infrastructure changes the requirements for success (Hagel, Seely Brown, & Davison, 2009). But even as business environments inevitably shift and become more complex, it is equally inevitable that businesses have areas of specific need and benefit that exist outside the rapidly changing competitive demand. It is possible to focus on discrete ways to assist business to be successful, thereby offering employment opportunity for persons once excluded by their inability, perceived or actual, to meet shifting demands (Callahan, 2010).

Because the intent is to focus on addressing specific employer need and benefit, rather than competing in a constantly changing, competitive environment, finding good answers to these questions is mostly a matter of practical knowledge rather than knowledge about employment trends and the traditional process of finding and succeeding at a job. Substantial numbers of job seekers invest in advice and support, as the success of edition after edition of *What Color is Your Parachute?* (Bolles, 2009) attests. While it may be true that those who bought Bolles’ book and read it without actively engaging its many useful exercises will have a larger stock of good ideas, many of which are supported by evidence, they will not benefit from a stronger flow of practical knowledge until they commit themselves to the risks of active exploration that builds on and extends their network of relationships and supports.

## **The Supported Employment Stall**

A generation of development, policy, technology, improved delivery mechanisms, and demonstrations of significant progress has not yet provided sufficient clarity and procedures to assure that all people with developmental disabilities have a good chance getting real jobs. Furthermore, there have been troubling signs that the integrated work enterprise is stalling, resulting in ever-increasing numbers of individuals with significant developmental disabilities being served in segregated work and day programs (Rusch & Braddock, 2004). Improving access to integrated employment has been a priority in US developmental disabilities policy since 1984 (Bellamy & Melia, 1991). The instructional and task design power necessary to give people access to competent performance on complex tasks has been growing since the 1970's (Gold, 1980). Provider organizations began to implement effective strategies for closing congregate day services and moving most people into employment in the 1980's (Murphy & Rogan, 1995). More and better options for organizing, funding, and delivering employment services have emerged (see for example, Griffin, Hammis, & Geary, 2007; Wehman, Inge, Revell, & Brooke, 2006). There are well documented examples of people with substantial impairments enjoying the benefits of good work over many years of fluctuating labor market conditions (Brown, Shiraga, & Kessler, 2006). With strong, capable and consistent leadership (Hall, Butterworth, Winsor, Gilmore & Metzel, 2007), several states and a number of localities have shown significant growth in the proportion of people in developmental disabilities system sponsored day services who are inclusively employed: by 2004 three states supported about 50% of people funded by the developmental disabilities system in integrated employment (Winsor & Butterworth, 2008).

Unfortunately, these achievements have not generalized. In 2004, the U.S. developmental disabilities system supported 22% of funded participants in integrated employment – while five states supported 5% or fewer people; the proportion of people supported in integrated employment in the US dropped from a high of 24 % in 2001. Although a smaller proportion of people were served in facility-based programs (such as sheltered workshops and work activity centers), facility-based programs consumed 57% of funding, compared with 12% for integrated employment and 31 % for community-based non-work services (such as day programs, and community recreation and integrated, non-work activity services), which have grown substantially and serve about 22% of people receiving day services (Winsor & Butterworth, 2008). This most current data is consistent with the longer-term trends identified by Rusch and Braddock (2004).

There are a number of common anecdotal explanations for this stall: unfavorable labor market conditions; lack of sufficient public investment; weak leadership; provider entrenchment; inadequate management and measurement systems; misaligned incentives for providers; resistance by employers; competing family and guardian priorities; benefits traps; unemployment as a choice of people with developmental disabilities; and hitting the limit of the employability of people with developmental disabilities given employer requirements. Unfortunately, at this time, there has been no published study that serves to verify these factors as causative of the stall.

None of these explanations are frivolous, but it would be self-defeating if they lead potential job seekers with disabilities to adopt a posture of resignation and set current system performance as the standard of adequacy. A more interesting course opens when each of these factors that likely limit access to employment become an impetus for knowledge creation and

innovative action. It is practical knowledge, produced with people with developmental disabilities and their networks, that provides the lift necessary for a renewed access to employment to take off.

### **Creating Practical Knowledge in Customized Employment**

Collaboration with the people with disabilities who present the greatest complexities to finding and succeeding at community employment generates useful knowledge that provides the best chance of dealing with the constraints that can trap people in segregation. It is by accompanying people across the edge defined by their exclusion that employment service providers can learn most. This basically means getting involved in the current lives of people, regardless of the settings in which they live, and using qualitative procedures to become aware of the question, “Who is this person?” (Callahan, Shumpert & Condon, 2009; Bodgan & Taylor, 1998). The knowledge gained by understanding the depth and breadth of people’s lives provide the opportunity for a positive and optimistic translation of the best of the individuals’ lives into possibilities for employment. Accordingly, we focus here on creating actionable knowledge with people who require the negotiation of personalized conditions throughout the process of getting and succeeding on a job, an outcome labeled *Customized Employment* by the US Department of Labor (Griffin, Hammis, & Geary, 2007).

Assisting a person with a disability to move from a history of expected exclusion into employment calls for both insight and risk taking by both the job seeker and the service system. What people with disabilities who are excluded need is personalized, practical knowledge that informs and encourages what they do with their allies, their employers, their co-workers, and their supporters? Some people with developmental disabilities will generate most or all of the

knowledge they need by collaborating within their own social networks, perhaps drawing on membership in an advocacy or support group, the internet, or the services of a generic Job Center. Others will need more intensive and personalized assistance. The more remote the prospect of employment seems to a person, the more skillful the knowledge development process must be and the more likely a successful search will include capable facilitation. Table 1 describes the array of capacities that offer the most people with disabilities the best chance at integrated employment.

Table 1. The Employment System Matrix

Actions by/with Job Seekers	Natural Support + Reasonable Accommodation & Technology	Support to Ordinary Processes	Negotiation of Personalized Conditions and Contributions
Decide to work	<i>Job seeker makes his/her own decision to work without assistance/support.</i>	<i>Job seeker gets encouragement and support from family and allies to consider employment</i>	<i>Job seeker and allies are explained customized employment and assured work will reflect the person.</i>
Identify focus: job or interests, conditions and contributions	<i>Job seeker reflects on local job market and personal interests and considers good match.</i>	<i>Job seeker receives typical assessment for employment and is assisted to identify job match.</i>	<i>Job seeker receives facilitated discovery to assist in identifying conditions, interests and contributions.</i>
Get the job	<i>Job seeker uses personal connections and those of allies to make employer contacts.</i>	<i>Job seeker is assisted by a job developer to find open jobs that match interests.</i>	<i>Job seeker is represented by a job developer to negotiate a custom fit with personal conditions, interests and contributions in relation to employer needs/benefits.</i>

Actions by/with Job Seekers	Natural Support + Reasonable Accommodation & Technology	Support to Ordinary Processes	Negotiation of Personalized Conditions and Contributions
Succeed on the job	<i>New employee receives supports as typically offered to all workers, including reasonable accommodation.</i>	<i>New employee and employer receive support by a job coach to perform the job responsibilities of the position filled.</i>	<i>New employee and employer receive support by a job coach to perform the duties of the customized job description.</i>

**The Matrix of Employment Services**

The system of employment services that is available to job seekers with significant developmental disabilities can be seen to exist on a matrix that details the decisions, activities and services needed by the entire range of persons with disabilities. The left-hand, vertical column describes the decisions of the job seeker and, in most cases, the accompanying actions by the service system. The top, horizontal row provides the employment relationship options that are available to job seekers to provide the necessary flexibility to make integrated, paid work possible. As job seekers proceed toward employment the matrix provides options for both the job seeker and their allies successfully achieve their desired outcome.

**Natural support plus reasonable accommodation and assistive technology** refers to services that are typically available to all job seekers, along with any legal entitlements for which they qualify, in the interaction with the capacities that generic employment services offer in finding a job and the capacities of workplaces can provide to offer success on the job. This the way most persons without life complexities become employed. The number of people with significant disabilities able to move into employment with this level of assistance is likely to increase as people and their families expect employment, learn such strategies as searching for



jobs through their social network, and secure access to effective assistive technology and reasonable accommodation. An example might be a rural family that contacts a local farm supply co-op, with whom the family has a relationship as customers, to employ their son/daughter who has an interest in maintaining farm equipment in a summer job. The job might entail preparing farm equipment with small engines for sale by un-boxing, lubricating, adjusting and test-running the equipment. The employer might provide the opportunity for the employee to work around classes at a local community college and act as a mentor to teach the young person to learn the way to work with the various types of equipment.

**Support to ordinary processes** refers to skilled assistance that increases the capacity of typical job search and workplace processes to lead to success on the job. Often referred to as supported employment, this option includes skilled and individualized benefits counseling, problem solving around potential changes in routines (such as work schedules or transportation), assistance with job search, adapting or adding equipment, consulting on systematic instruction or adaptation of the tasks included in a person's job description, arranging personal assistance, or problem solving and competence building around job orientation and supervision issues are examples of such support. This option presumes that with necessary and targeted supports individuals will meet the typical expectations and stated demands of employers. An example might involve offering a local small manufacturer a cultural analysis of the workplace by an employment provider to determine the manner in which current employees learn and perform their jobs. As a result of the analysis, the employer might be offered job coaching assistance on

behalf of an individual who is interested in assembly work. The job coach might primarily work with the employer to meet the needs of the supported employee.

**Negotiation of personalized conditions** occurs when support for ordinary processes is insufficient to identify, get, or succeed at a good job. This situation occurs when the demands of an open job create a barrier that is not resolvable with reasonable accommodation, technology or supports. The barriers are often related to the complexities in the lives of job seekers with disabilities. Most often the barriers relate to performance or production of high demand aspects of jobs but they can also relate to other factors of employer expectations such as the need for multi-tasking, multiple supervisors, typical times for employment, behavioral and social requirement and numerous other expectations. Persons with significant impact of disabilities are often felt not to be appropriate for these existing employer demands. This option begins with a discovery process that requires substantial time from someone with a well-tuned eye and ear for interest and capacity in people and potential workplaces; the ability to identify valuable unmet employer need and negotiate with employers the terms on which the person can fill that need; and the capacity to discover and implement what it takes in the way of adaptation, technology, instruction, and problem solving for the person to deliver value to the employer in a way that is dignified and satisfying.

This matrix describes a repertoire of the degree of sameness or difference necessary for one to become employed, compared to most job seekers, not of types of service. The rule for each stage is based on a judgment about what will lead to access to and long-term success on the job. Move only as far to the right of each row as necessary and move back to the left as soon as possible. In other words, move only as far away from that which is typical as is necessary for

success and keep reverting back to typical processes at each stage of becoming employed. The rule for using the matrix is: don't assume that either a capacity or a need for support in one cell determines the amount of support needed in other cells. Each cell of the matrix is seen as independent of the others regarding the prediction of supports needed. The starting point is that which is most natural, most typical for most persons. For example, an individual might start the employment process with virtually no support needed to make the decision to become employed than that offered by family and other allies. But individuals may need significant supports to determine the dimensions of the conditions of success, their interests and potential contributions in deciding their focus on the type of employment that best suits them.

The employment environment changes continually and so do possibilities for people with disabilities. Stocks of knowledge need continual updating and the taken for granted assumptions that made sense in the last century don't support the kind of change needed to significantly increase the numbers of people with developmental disabilities in integrated employment. At least part of the problem relates to the distinction between the traditional strategy of comparison as the primary tool of understanding competence as opposed to discovery and translation. A capable employment system enables continual innovation by purposely generating knowledge flows at three levels: whole system management, provider organization, and individual practice. Those responsible for managing the whole employment service system shape their investment, program design, and management decisions with a continually updated account of what is working to move excluded people into good jobs. As a community of practice, employment service workers improve the practices that build intelligence in their relationships with people with disabilities and others who make a difference to successful employment. They do this in a manner similar to that of resume development. When a job seeker creates a resume,

the intent is to portray the individual's best dimensions of performance to potential employers. Traditional practice in employment services for persons with significant disabilities has done the opposite. Comparison has been the yardstick by which individuals have been excluded. Knowledge creation allows for the optimism inherent in the resume. Making a shift to this thinking by employment staff involves shared problem solving, exchanging and refining strategies and techniques, and exploring the questions that arise in their work (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). In their daily relationships, employment service practitioners must build collaborations with job seekers, families and community members, along with colleagues, that provide strong contexts in which to apply, adapt and invent support strategies and technologies. The good news is that much of this activity can be augmented by joining with the job seekers and their allies to discover existing analogs in life that can be translated to employment success (Phillips, et. al., 2009).

The conditions for generating practical knowledge have themselves become the focus of explicit learning (for an exemplar, see Nonaka, Toyama, & Hirata, 2008). Practical knowledge grows and performance accelerates when people have sufficient working trust to intentionally immerse themselves in questions with meaningful but uncertain answers; reach outside usual boundaries to engage people and join groups with diverse perspectives and capacities; test familiar frames by being curious, critical, and playful; and engage in productive inquiry by getting stuck in worthwhile problems and together figuring a way through (Nonaka, Toyama & Hirata, 2008; Senge, Seely Brown, & Rheingold, 2008). This involves taking a journey in which the destination is known but the route is confusing and the experiences along the way are uncertain. This is much like the journey to employment for persons with significant developmental disabilities. The end goal is clear but those on the journey have to agree to live

into the answers, to find the knowledge and direction necessary for completion as part of the journey itself.

The path to useful knowledge in employment services runs through participation in the construction of new social realities: work environments that benefit from the contributions of previously excluded people. Much useful knowledge is tacit, enacted in the way the work is done at its best. A key purpose of making explicit what is known in action is to test, improve, and disseminate effective practices and policies to improve the employment system as a whole.

### **Facilitated *Discovery* as Knowledge Creation**

*Discovery* (Callahan, Shumpert, & Condon, 2009) describes a set of practices that initiate a flow of relevant knowledge for people making purposeful changes in their lives. These practices have been tested and refined since 1986, mostly in the context of a successful process for supporting people with significant developmental disabilities to establish themselves in integrated employment, often in customized jobs. Starting with the recognition that many individuals with work complexities, such as difficulty meeting production and performance standards, uncertain behaviors and social interaction, deficits in academic information, as a result of disability, were being excluded from employment at the outset by comparative evaluation practices, it became necessary to establish an alternative. Starting in the late 1980's a series of national employment projects embraced discovery (or the *vocational profile strategy* as it was then called) to create the foundation of information necessary for successful work in the community (McLoughlin, Garner & Callahan, 1987; Callahan, 1991, Callahan & Garner, 1997). Drawing on its roots in qualitative research methods (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), *Discovery* for employment proceeds in two steps. First it is important to construct as full an answer as possible

to the question “Who is this person?” Then it is necessary to translate this understanding of the person into possibilities relevant to employment by attending closely and identifying interests, potential contributions, and conditions for the person’s success. The translation informs the answer to the first question on the path to integrated employment: “Can I work, and do I choose to look for a good job?” If the person decides to seek work, the next stage is to begin a job search by creating a *Profile*. People can self-guide *Discovery*, or share their inquiry with a peer group, or use the assistance of a skilled facilitator. We focus here on facilitated *Discovery* because it exemplifies important conditions for knowledge creation that contrast in important ways with common practices in employment services. The process of *Discovery* is outlined in Table 2.

**Table 2: The Process of Discovery**

Process Step	Context
1. Explaining the process to the person and allies and supporters, as appropriate	Service location, person’s home or community meeting space
2. Meeting with the person in places where they are at their best	Home, neighborhood, school, community
3. Conversing and interviewing person, allies and supporters	Working or living location for each person interviewed
4. Observing the person in activities of everyday life	Varied locations within home, neighborhood, community, service agency, school
5. Participating with the person in familiar and novel activities	Specific, targeted activities that reflect both the most familiar and competent activities of the person as well as well-matched novel ones
6. Reviewing all materials that describe the person’s life, sorting for positive information	Permanent files, scrap books, memorabilia, awards, crafts, art
7. Compiling all materials into a descriptive Profile format	Joint process between facilitator staff, individual, family, friends and other allies

The facilitator approaches the person with the conviction that an integrated job is within any person’s reach even when the way there is not clear, and facilitated *Discovery* is about thinking divergently to build up a working sense of possibilities and create relationships that will support action. So, the use of *Discovery* allows facilitators to suspend questions about whether

the person will decide to work and what sort of work would fit the person best. Instead, the process of *Discovery* invites the person and those who know the person to immerse themselves with the facilitator in exploring the open-ended question, “Who is this person?” in a variety of ways and from different perspectives. The only respectful question that is out of bounds at this stage is the most obvious one in a process aimed at employment, namely, “What job do you want to do?” In part, people are enjoined from this question because pursuing it shifts attention away from fully exploring who the person is now, prematurely converges on a particular job title, and narrows attention to a debate about predictions of employment feasibility.

In 1992, the U.S Congress tackled this issue by removing the necessity of comparative evaluation from its former use as a gatekeeper for access to vocational rehabilitation services by directly the federal employment system for persons with disabilities to generally expect benefit (i.e. successfully obtaining employment) for all persons who apply for services. It has been observed for many years that a focus on comparative predictions based on evaluations very seldom favor the person’s prospects, often sap confidence that the person can work at all, and frequently raise anxieties about risk and loss that shut down the desire to explore. Done well, this step builds desire to negotiate suitable work and informs the rest of the process of achieving success in an integrated job (Phillips, et. al. 2009).

The knowledge that moves an excluded person into integrated work is particular and situated. It is produced in a respectful relationship through a variety of practices that purposefully combine conversation and spending time doing things together with more structured interviews and observation. The person and those who know the person in different ways are invited to be collaborating experts in formulating what is unique about this person, what capacities this person has, and what opportunities this person might find meaningful. The process begins in a setting

where the person feels most safe and comfortable, often their family home. As working trust grows, people try new things together to find out what stretching their comfort zone a bit reveals. *Discovery* begins by moving the facilitator across service system boundaries and into the person's world and then invites the person and those who know the person to consider the new possibilities that lie on the other side of the boundary that has kept the person away from opportunities for success in community settings. In constructing and talking about possibilities, participants in *Discovery* practice the knowledge creation disciplines of openness, close attention, and translation from what is tacit in current contexts to what could be meaningful in the context of work.

*Discovery* makes what is tacit in the person's history and everyday life explicit.

Findings are considered in the context of identifying unique capacities that an employer could value, identifying interests that could make work meaningful and identifying necessary conditions that could make work successful. Success depends on close attention and skill in interpreting across contexts. Examples of translation include these: "Andy removes a CD from its case, opens the CD drawer, inserts the CD, closes the drawer, pushes "Play", and adjusts the volume. He could be taught to copy training CD's for the HR department of a large company." (Potential contribution.) "James owns the TV remote and watches cop shows for hours every night. He might like to work in some aspect of law enforcement." (Likely interest.) "Trang was asked to join a group of other students in preparing spaghetti for a high school fund raiser. She worked for one hour. The teacher says Trang will not help in the special education classroom kitchen. Trang will probably benefit more from peer supports for functional activities in a natural setting than activities offered solely by a teacher in an instructional setting." (Probable condition.)



Translation is a practice of consciously shifting the frames people use to make sense of experience and thereby opening new possibilities for action. This matters especially when the person is perceived as so impaired as to make integrated work impossible or a local labor market is perceived as having no slack whatsoever for negotiating employment roles and conditions. One of the arts of facilitation is encouraging a shift from a deficiency-scarcity frame that justifies exclusion to a capacity-assets frame that encourages the entrepreneurial activity of creating new ways to add value in the workplace. The possibilities disclosed by such reframing are not predictions or prescriptions; they are openings to new ways to see a person in relation to work and invitations to seek further knowledge in a better-defined direction of search. Andy may never copy a CD at work, but frozen perceptions of him as unable to work start to melt when he is imagined as learning to do an economically valuable task which is grounded in what he can already do. For example, attending to the practical implications of Trang's unexpected productivity as part of a team of peer's guides selection of work environments and emphasizes the importance of assuring her membership in a supportive team of co-workers.

As people participate in *Discovery*, they engage in practices that create useful knowledge. They invest working trust in people considering the possibilities revealed by careful regard for everyday life; they immerse themselves together in meaningful, open questions; they cross boundaries to explore; they test and switch frames to reveal very specific possibilities that will guide and motivate the next steps in the employment process. By working together, they begin to align a network of people whose actions will feed a flow of practical knowledge around integrated employment for this particular person.

## Knowledge Creation versus Prediction and Prescription

The practices utilized in *Discovery* contrast with traditional employment strategies that gather experienced professionals to assess the person's capacity for work, guide the person to make a vocational plan, develop a job and match the person to it, and provide training and coaching to allow the person to satisfy job requirements. These tasks can be done in more and less effective and respectful ways. People can be tested with unfamiliar work samples in unfamiliar service contexts or thoughtfully interviewed about their skills, preferences, and needs for support. Assessments can be aimed at culling those who threaten an agency's success rate or revealing a person's strengths and weaknesses. Plans can be made as a professionally defined and guided exercise in setting goals to remediate deficiencies revealed by professional assessment or as a conversation centered on discovering a person's idea of their dream job. People can be matched to an inventory of already identified jobs with employers familiar to the professionals or benefit from a search conducted to meet their preferences as much as it is realistic to do so given employer requirements. Training and coaching can be little more than heightened supervision and prompting or skillful and systematic instruction that increase co-worker's skill and desire to help.

Within this pattern of service, more respectful approaches are preferable and effective, in part because they have a greater potential to produce practical knowledge. However, even the best of these approaches requires people and their allies to meet a threshold for entry that many will find too high because they are designed to bring motivated people into a professionally defined process that will push them into employment. Those whose attention is framed by a deficiency perspective on themselves or their potential employers will be trapped in their own prediction that work is impossible for them (or those whose interests they are empowered to

protect). Those who lack the experience of using and extending their social networks to create ways through barriers will be daunted by their estimate of the losses and difficulties presented by going to work. Those who distrust or resent professionals defining their life chances won't have the relationships necessary to collaborative exploration and use of expertise. Those who lack a grounded appreciation of their own capacities and sources of meaning will have over-specific and often misleading answers to the question of what job they prefer.

For at least the segment of people with significant developmental disabilities who are least certain that work is possible and desirable for them, it makes more sense to design a process with a much higher investment in supporting the person, the person's allies, and the person's potential employers to experience themselves as participants in a process of generating relevant knowledge. As they are joined by a facilitator who models openness, respectfully joins them in discovering the employment possibilities implicit in their everyday experience, and encourages recruitment of others in the exploration, they experience of pulling in and organizing the support resources needed to smooth the way into integrated employment. This is facilitated by the process of customized employment as developed and researched through initiatives funded by the Office of Disability (ODEP) within the U. S. Department of Labor starting in 2001 (Szoc, R. & Harvey, J. (2009); National Center on Workforce and Disability/Adult, 2007)

By following this process job seekers and their allies can build trust, try on new frames for making sense of their experience, strengthen their networks, build skill and confidence in problem solving, and extend the field of opportunities they see as meaningful. Putting people at the center of a process of that pulls them into integrated employment has a better chance of supporting those alienated from the possibility of work than trying to fit them into a process designed to push them to a job. Strategies that support people and their allies to pull in resources

and organize opportunities by negotiation allow a greater variety of work arrangements to emerge than strategies that reduce professional uncertainty with predefined process and outcomes. (For more on the distinction between mobilizing resources by push versus pull, see Hagel & Seely Brown, 2008).

Having clear sight of possibilities and the resolve to find and succeed at a good job is a necessary first step, but the forces of exclusion still shape a hard path. People and their allies will have ample opportunities for productive inquiry, a name for getting stuck together and figuring out a way to keep moving forward. Subsequent steps in the competitive employment process build on *Discovery* to continue the creation of practical knowledge. Conditions never stop changing so the knowledge flow can be refreshed as long as people continue to notice relevant changes and find ways to make the best of them.

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